



**Projects built by the Tulsa District have provided an estimated 46 billion kilowatt-hours of electric power. About 142 million tons of cargo have been shipped on the waterway navigation system. And the District's flood control projects have prevented about \$2 billion in flood losses, the Corps estimates. Tulsa District projects have provided 2 million acre-feet of water supply storage and logged 1.2 billion recreation visitors.**

In 50 years, the Tulsa District of the U.S. Corps of Engineers has moved mountains, literally. The audacious workers of the Tulsa District have reshaped the earth through bold projects that have changed, forever, the face of the region and immeasurably enhanced the quality of life of its people.

It was not the work of timid men.

In the broad range of salty tales about civil works, one should first look at the productive but short-lived Denison District, then at the Arkansas River Waterway and other major civil works projects that blossomed under the leadership of the Corps' office in Tulsa.

It was called

## **THE TEXAS CINDERELLA,**

and it was a hot afternoon in Denison, Texas — June 29, 1939 — when the news arrived.

The *Denison Herald* got out a fast extra edition. When it hit the streets, so did the townspeople. They closed up shops, and thousands danced through the town in an impromptu parade.

The *Herald* recalled it later as a spontaneous carnival and general celebration for Denisonians, who "streamed down Main Street to the accompaniment of blaring horns and general bedlam." Some compared it to the celebrations when World War I ended.

The news? President Roosevelt had signed a bill allocating \$5.6 million to begin construction on Denison Dam. After years of planning, waiting, and worrying, the dam that would impound Lake Texoma was about to become a reality.<sup>2</sup>

For the depressed Denison region, it would mean \$53 million in flood control, electric power, water supply, and one of the most popular recreation areas in the United States. But even more, it meant jobs. It meant economic salvation.

Bob Kerr called Lake Texoma a "Cinderella" in 1960: "the largest body of water between the Great Lakes and the Gulf of Mexico . . . , the fourth largest man-made lake in the world [with] more visitors than any other government recreation attraction in the United States, including even Yellowstone National Park."<sup>3</sup>